

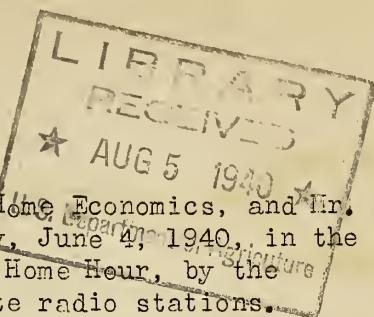
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Strawberries for Next Winter



A radio interview between Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and Mr. Wallace Kadderly, Office of Information, broadcast Tuesday, June 4, 1940, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, by the National Broadcasting Company and a network of 92 associate radio stations.

--ooOoo--

WALLACE KADDERLY:

Yes, Everett, the "folks in Washington" are right here with news from the Department of Agriculture. And as usual on Tuesdays, Ruth Van Deman is with us, to report on what's new and interesting in the Bureau of Home Economics. Ruth, is this the day you're going to say something about strawberries?

RUTH VAN DEMAN:

I had it in mind .... strawberries for next winter.

KADDERLY:

Why next winter?

VAN DEMAN:

Don't you like strawberry jam .... strawberry preserves on hot biscuits on cold winter mornings?

KADDERLY:

Certainly I do. I like strawberries in every way, shape, or form. That's just the trouble.

VAN DEMAN:

Oh, I see. It's not that you like strawberry jam less, it's that you like strawberries some other way more.

KADDERLY:

Yes, strawberries in shortcake, to be quite frank. Old-fashioned strawberry shortcake .... made with big biscuits .... split open, buttered while they're hot .... you know.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, I know. Go on.

KADDERLY:

Lots of red, ripe strawberries crushed up with sugar and spread between, and around, and all over the biscuit.

VAN DEMAN:

Um hum. Go on.

KADDERLY:

And a big pitcher of cream along side.

(Over)

VAN DEMAN:

. Thick, cream-colored cream ..... Go on.

KADDERLY:

Go on? That's the picture about as true to life as I know how to paint it.

VAN DEMAN:

You paint it so clearly, I just want to know whether you like a fork or a spoon to eat your shortcake with.

KADDERLY:

Both, please. I never leave a crumb or a spoonful of juice. I believe in doing justice to strawberry shortcake.

VAN DEMAN:

Full and complete justice. You certainly know how to do it with words too.

KADDERLY:

But, Ruth, I didn't mean to lead you off your main theme of the day, with all this talk about strawberry shortcake. I'll just fade out now and let you proceed with the jam kettle.....

VAN DEMAN:

Leave me with a crate of strawberries to sort and stem?

KADDERLY:

That wouldn't exactly be a fair division of labor, now that you put it that way.

VAN DEMAN:

Hardly. Besides I need you to turn the pages in the bulletin here.

KADDERLY:

This copy of "Homemade Jellies, Jams, and Preserves?" The pages look as though they'd been turned .... well-turned.

VAN DEMAN:

Speak right out, Wallace. Call them dog eared. That's the way bulletins get in the kitchen if they're used often. That's one reason we keep reprinting these bulletins on canning and jelly-making and preserving. Women write us sometimes and say their copies are practically falling to pieces. We are always glad to send new ones.

KADDERLY:

Ruth, I have the place here..... strawberry jelly with added pectin. Is that what you wanted?

VAN DEMAN:

It wasn't the one I was thinking about. But it's a good one to mention, just in passing. Strawberries are one of the fruits that have no pectin of their own.

KADDERLY:

So you add it in the form of an extract .... apple, lemon, or orange pectin extract .... so these directions say.

VAN DEMAN:

That's right. They are the sources of commercial or homemade pectin extracts.

KADDERLY:

With one of these pectin extracts can't you make jelly from any kind of fruit?

VAN DEMAN:

Practically any kind .... if it has good flavor and color .... that is, a flavor pronounced enough to stand out above the pectin extract and taste like the fruit you're making the jelly with.

KADDERLY:

Strawberries ought to do that. They have a wonderful flavor and plenty of acid.

VAN DEMAN:

Plenty of acid if they aren't too ripe. It's better not to use overripe fruit for making jelly or jam, or preserves, or putting up in any way.

KADDERLY:

Here under strawberry preserves, I see three different methods.

VAN DEMAN:

The third one's sun preserves, isn't it?

KADDERLY:

Yes, method 3, sun preserves. And the first sentence here says:

"Strawberry sun preserves can be made only if there is sufficiently hot sunshine to cause rapid evaporation." I should think sun preserves would be something of a risk here in Washington, with a shower coming along almost every afternoon.

VAN DEMAN:

Strawberry sun preserves are pretty much of a sporting proposition, anywhere. But in this climate they take a lot of watching and moving outdoors and in.

KADDERLY:

If I were making strawberry preserves I believe I'd stick to the kettle-style.

VAN DEMAN:

There are hazards even there. You have to watch to see that the preserves don't stick to the kettle, when they're getting to the cooked-down, finishing-off stage.

KADDERLY:

I knew all this was over my depth.

VAN DEMAN:

Not at all. With your exact eye, you'd be a great help in getting the biggest, firmest, most beautiful berries in one pile, and the smaller less perfect ones in the other. That's one difference between Method 1 and Method 2.

Method 1 is for preserves with every berry as whole as possible. Method 2 makes use of the smaller berries crushed up for juice. Either way you weigh the berries after they're washed and drained.

KADDERLY:

I could do the weighing. But why weigh? Why not measure?

VAN DEMAN:

Weighing's more accurate. The rule is a pound of sugar to a pound of fruit.

KADDERLY:

A pound of sugar to each pound of strawberries, after they're sorted, and capped, and washed.

VAN DEMAN:

That's right. Then for these large select berries, the next step is to combine the fruit and sugar in alternate layers and let them stand overnight .... or all day, if you want to start early in the morning and finish off in the evening.

A lot of juice comes out as the berries stand with the sugar. Then they're ready to cook.

And here's where you have to keep your eye on them, or they'll stick to the kettle. After they've boiled briskly for about 15 or 20 minutes, the syrup gets thick and the preserves will stick and scorch very easily.

KADDERLY:

Can't you stir them and keep them moving?

VAN DEMAN:

You don't want to break them up. These are preserves with the berries whole.

KADDERLY:

True. The skin of the strawberry is very delicate.

VAN DEMAN:

So any stirring you do, has to be very gentle. I shake the kettle, and sometimes slip an asbestos mat under it, to temper the heat. But you don't want to slow down the cooking so much you have to boil the preserves a long time. That makes them strong and dark-colored, and shrivels the berries up into hard little knots.

In fact, that's the main difference in preserve making now and in the old days. Then they got out the great big iron kettle, and went to it, bubbled and boiled, stewed and stirred, for days.

Now we make up a smaller quantity at a time .... never more than 6 to 8 pounds of fruit in one batch.

And we carry each lot through as quickly as possible. That way we keep the bright red color of the berries, and the aroma of the fresh fruit.

Well, Wallace, I think that gets our preserves up to the end point .... ready to seal in hot sterilized jars.

KADDERLY:

No open crocks, so a hungry boy can dip in now and then.

VAN DEMAN:

It's better not. The mold takes its share that way too.

KADDERLY:

I bow to the march of science, in making preserves in the home kitchen, as elsewhere.

And I'll admit these strawberry preserves taste ... I mean sound .... very superior. You've made them seem so real I almost got a taste now and then.

VAN DEMAN:

Sorry it had to be almost. But the only real thing I brought along today is the bulletin with the recipes. So if you want to do the honors by that, I'll make my bow ....

KADDERLY:

Well, Farm and Home friends, as Ruth Van Deman is bowing her way out here, I'll just give you the title of this bulletin again, "Homemade Jellies, Jams, and Preserves." It's free. To get a copy just send a post card to the Bureau of Home Economics, Department of Agriculture, here in Washington, D. C. If you're rushed for time, just write two words on the card - jelly bulletin, .... and your own name and address. The Bureau of Home Economics will do the rest. As I said this bulletin is free. And besides the methods for making strawberry preserves, it has information on how to put up all the other kinds of fruits.... all through the summer .... blackberry jelly, currant, grape .... peach preserves, .... plum jam .... all the old-fashioned and new-fashioned jellies, jams, and preserves, with the latest scientific slant on how-to do-it.

